

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

England & Wales · Charity number 252603

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 1967-06-23

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

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Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC GENERALLY AND EPECIALLY THE INHABITANTS OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER PUBLIC INTEREST IN AND CARE FOR THE BEAUTY, HISTOR AND CHARACTER OF THE CITY AND ITS SURROUNDINGS. (FOR FULL DETAILS SEE RULES AND CONSTITUTION).

Activities: The Society's area of interest is the pre-1974 city boundaries of Rochester including urban Strood. The Society's activities cover guided tours of Rochester, publication of leaflets/books on the City's history and making representation on relevant planning applications to Medway Council. The Society is represented on many bodies in the area covering tourism, built environment and conservation.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Human Resources, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science, Environment/conservation/heritage, Recreation
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** CITY OF ROCHESTER AND ITS SURROUNDINGS
- Medway

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£12,115	£18,491	-	-
2023-12-31	£30,977	£35,151	-	-
2022-12-31	£47,103	£33,264	-	-
2021-12-31	£33,911	£24,311	-	-
2021-03-31	£5,646	£19,791	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
BARBARA CHRISTINE FISHER		2023-06-28
Christine Ann Furminger		2019-06-12
Paul Richard Anderson		2020-09-30
Rob Flood		2018-06-13

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 252603

Accounts

The City of Rochester Society

The Annual General Meeting of the City of Rochester Society

will be held at

THE GUILDHALL, HIGH STREET, ROCHESTER

on

WEDNESDAY 26 JUNE 2024

at 7.30 for 8.00 pm

Please bring this booklet with you to the AGM. It contains:

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 55th Annual General Meeting of the City of Rochester Society will be held in the Court Room of the Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester at 8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 26 June 2024.

A G E N D A

1. To receive apologies for absence.
2. To approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 28 June 2023 and to consider any matters arising from that meeting which are not covered elsewhere on this agenda. A copy of the minutes accompanies this agenda.
3. To receive the report of the Executive committee for the year 2023/24, a copy of which also accompanies this agenda, and to discuss any matters arising from it.
4. To approve the accounts for the financial year 2023/24.
5. To elect a President of the Society.
6. To elect a Vice President of the Society.
7. To elect the officers of the Society:
 - (i) Chairman;
 - (ii) Vice Chairman;
 - (iii) Honorary Treasurer;
 - (iv) Honorary Secretaryincluding holding ballots if necessary.
8. To elect up to seven members of the Executive committee including the holding of a ballot if necessary.
9. With regard to the Society's Rules & Constitution, item 4, the Executive committee wishes to recommend for members' approval the raising of subscription rates to commence from 1st April 2025 as follows:

Yearly membership (adult):	£15.00
Yearly membership: (junior: under 16):	£6.00
Life membership (adult):	£150.00
Corporate membership:	£45.00
10. Any other business, during which members may raise points for discussion upon any

aspect of the Society's activities or policies.

Addendums to the Agenda

- Item 4 above:** A summary of the accounts forms part of the Executive committee's report. Copies of the final accounts, which will be presented for members' approval at the AGM, may be obtained after 1st June from the Hon Treasurer, Barbara Fisher at the address given in the Society's Newsletter or by email: bcfisher@btinternet.com
- Item 7 above:** **Nominations for election as an officer of the Society are invited.** Any member wishing to be considered for election as an officer of the Society should complete the enclosed nomination paper, indicating which post they are standing for, and return it to the Secretary at the address or email address given in the Society's Newsletter to arrive no later than two days before the AGM.
- Item 8 above:** **Nominations for membership of the Executive committee are invited.** Any member wishing to be considered for election to the Executive committee should complete the enclosed nomination paper, indicating which post they are standing for, and return it to the Secretary at the address or email address given in the Society's Newsletter to arrive no later than two days before the AGM.
- Item 9 above:** If members wish to raise matters of substance requiring the gathering of information it would be helpful if they could advise the Secretary in writing in advance of the meeting.

**Minutes of the 54th Annual General Meeting of the City of Rochester Society
held in the Court Room of the Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester
at 8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 28 June 2023**

The number present at the meeting was 50.

The Chairman welcomed members and outlined the course of events for the evening.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from the Mayor, Cllr Nina Gurung, and from the following members:

Chris Buckwell, Terry Clennell, Hugh Hawkins, Brian and Audrey Hext, John Hill, Angela Howe, Bob Howe, Laurence McVeigh, Andy Ratcliffe, Kathleen Richter, Jean Skilling, Chris Webb, Jan Webb, Mr and Mrs T Wood, Malcolm Wright.

2. Minutes of the 53rd Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2022 were within the booklet containing the Annual Report which had been circulated to members. The minutes were agreed as a true record, duly endorsed and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising

On behalf of members, Vice President John Allison enquired about the position regarding the Society review being undertaken by Terry Clennell, who was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. The Chairman responded that several meetings had been conducted with the Executive committee and that membership views would now be sought. The consultation aspect was due to commence shortly and details of how to become involved would be circulated to members.

John Allison also expressed his concern regarding the craft fairs and the present uncertainty regarding the June event. James O'Donoghue took the opportunity to introduce himself to members and explained that discussions were taking place with Council representatives. The need to know events dates in good time to allow for planning ahead was also discussed.

4. Annual Report of the Executive committee

The Annual Report had been distributed to members following the May *Newsletter*. It was endorsed by members present and signed by the Chairman.

5. Finance

The accounts for the year 2022/23, which had been signed off by the independent examiners, were presented by the Treasurer.

6. The President and Society Officers

The Executive committee had proposed that Alan Moss should be invited to remain as President of the Society for a further year and this proposal was enthusiastically agreed by

members. The four officers of the Executive committee, who will also act as Society Trustees, are:

Chairman:	Rob Flood
Vice Chairman:	Paul Anderson
Honorary Treasurer:	Barbara Fisher
Honorary Secretary:	Christine Furminger

Five other members were appointed to the Executive committee for the coming year:

Odette Buchanan
Terry Clennell
James O'Donoghue
Ian Smith
Chris Webb.

7. Any other business

Town Crier Competition

Mike Billingham, the Town Crier, updated members on preparations for the Town Crier Competition which had been delayed and was now planned to take place on Saturday 7 October 2023.

Guided Walk

John Bradshaw and Terri Zbyszewska would be conducting a new walk which would include the Chatham and Luton Forts.

Strood High Street

New member Roger Backway expressed his concerns about prominent unoccupied buildings in Strood High Street which were becoming increasingly unkempt and an eyesore for residents and visitors. It was agreed that the Planning sub-committee would investigate the situation.

Presentations

The Chairman made a presentation to Martin Dodsworth in grateful recognition of his many years of involvement with the Society. An active member of the Executive committee, Martin was a walking tour guide and organised the Society's booked tours. Jean Skilling, the Society's previous Treasurer, had been unable to attend and a gift was later made to her at home as a token of thanks for her hard work on behalf of the Society.

The President expressed his thanks to the Guildhall Museum's staff for their assistance with arranging the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting drew to a close and members re-grouped in the Members Room, adjoining the Court Hall, to enjoy the opportunity to socialise with the aid of a raffle organised by Eileen Allison and light refreshments organised by Sarah and Paul Anderson.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

2023/24

President: Alan Moss

Vice-Presidents:

John Allison Derek Barnard Robert Howe Colin Whyman

Executive Committee – 2023/24

Chairman: Rob Flood

Vice-Chairman: Paul Anderson

Treasurer: Barbara Fisher

Secretary: Christine Furminger

Odette Buchanan
Terry Clennell
James O'Donoghue

Ian Smith
Chris Webb

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Introduction

This report of the Society's activities over the past year is presented for members' approval. Any matters concerning the report should be addressed to:

The Secretary, 165 High Street, Halling, Rochester, Kent ME2 1BT

1. Chairman's Report

Rob Flood

- 1.1** Welcome to our 2023-24 annual reports. I hope that many of you will find the time to read them through and we always welcome your comments.
- 1.2** Although Covid restrictions seem a long time ago now, we are suffering from a substantial decrease in the number of members stepping forward to volunteer. Having said that, most of our members meetings are well-attended.
- 1.3** Executive committee member Terry Clennell (also the Chair of the Friends of Rochester Churchfields and Esplanade) has continued his work looking at the purpose and scope of the Society and its activities. We've consulted with the wider membership through two well-attended discussion meetings and Terry is working on the results.
- 1.4** The Summer Dickens and Dickensian Christmas Festivals took place in 2023 although in changed guise. The Summer Festival was much reduced and we didn't receive sufficient notification to allow for a Craft Fair of any size. We were moved from the Castle Gardens to the Moat for the Christmas Festival, and again the Craft Fair was much reduced in size. My gratitude goes to Ian Smith, James O'Donoghue and John Allison for their hard work and patience in endeavouring to make the best of an unsatisfactory situation.
- 1.5** As previously reported, Ian Smith's intention to stand down as Craft Fair organiser was thwarted last year. After the Summer Festival, Executive committee member James O'Donoghue stepped up and worked alongside Ian and John on the 2023 Dickensian Christmas event. James will be taking over the day-to-day organising of the Craft Fair for 2024. Unfortunately, we were notified in early March 2024 that the Summer Dickens Festival has been removed from the events calendar so James is now concentrating on the November/December event.
- 1.6** The Craft Fair is an important part of the Society's work and creates most of the income that enables us to fulfil our charitable purposes as well as keeping membership fees artificially low. I'm hopeful that we will be able to find a way of working with the Council that makes the Craft Fair sustainable to all parties.
- 1.7** I know I say this every year but if you think you may be able to assist at the Craft Fair, perhaps for a morning or afternoon - just an hour or two will be most useful - either before, during or after the event - please do get in touch with any member of the Executive committee. All and any help will be gratefully received.
- 1.8** I am sorry to have to report that Odette Buchanan has decided to step down from the Executive committee after many years of active involvement. Odette has been a member of the committee since June 2008 and was involved with walking tours for many

years. Her commitment, enthusiasm, sense of humour and energy have always been a great asset to us and her involvement as Society Archivist, with the Publishing and Publicity sub-committee and links with other local organisations such as the Friends of Broomhill have proved very useful. We are aware that she will keep a keen eye on our activities in the future.

- 1.9** My thanks go once again to Christine who has organised some great members meetings. We are now settled in to the Vines Church Hall and I'm pleased that we have access to a hearing loop for our hard-of-hearing members.
- 1.10** I was delighted to be invited by the Mayor of Medway Cllr Nina Gurung to join her at the Mayor of Gravesham's fundraising event.
- 1.11** I have continued to attend Civic Voice's excellent Zoom seminars which have focused on planning and design.
- 1.12** The Society has continued to participate in the Chatham Intra High Street Heritage Action Zone Area, half of which is in Rochester. The HSHAZ project came to an end in February 2024 but the group's committee decided to form an Intra Community Interest Company and I will still be taking an active role.
- 1.13** The Society continues to run free walking tours of Historic Rochester. When Martin Dodsworth moved from Rochester last year, he stepped away from booked tours. I am delighted that Geoff Ettridge has now taken on the role. Martin is owed many thanks for his commitment over the years. My thanks are due to both John Bradshaw (open walks), Geoff (booked tours) and to our superb team of volunteer guides who continued their excellent work throughout this year. In March, John organised another brilliant 'Guides Day', this time with a tour of Rochester Cathedral followed by a meeting at Eastgate House. Special thanks are also due to James O'Donoghue, press and publicity officer for the Tours sub-committee, for his sterling work spreading the word.
- 1.14** The 2023 Conservation Award discussion resulted in our deciding to give two awards again. The first of these went to Shepherd Neame for their excellent renovation and restoration of The Crown public house at the junction of the High Street and the Esplanade (now called "The Royal Crown"). The second award went to another public house, The Ship on Rochester High Street in Chatham Intra. Sign writer extraordinaire Mick Pollard has done a tremendous job of restoring The Ship exterior and this building really stands out as a superb example of what can be done with a lick of paint (and some not inconsiderable skill).
- 1.15** I have been pleased to represent the Society at Medway Champions meetings. The Society once again sponsored the 2023 Medway Open Studios event.
- 1.16** My grateful thanks must go, yet again, to our President and Newsletter Editor, Alan Moss. As ever, Alan has remained indefatigable in his approach and has produced great copies of our much-loved Newsletter against all the odds. My thanks are also due to Phil Dodd for pulling the Society's 2024 calendar together which has been very well-received.
- 1.17** I would like to express thanks to my fellow Trustees - our Vice-Chairman Paul Anderson, Treasurer Barbara Fisher and Secretary Christine Furminger, for their constant support and assistance over the past year.

- 1.18** Last, but by no means least, I want to express a debt of gratitude to the Executive committee. The energy and the commitment of everyone involved is inspiring.
- 1.19** Shortly before this Annual Report went to print, and too late to be included in the May issue of Newsletter, we were extremely sorry to learn of the recent death of John Liddiard. John joined the Executive committee in June 1986. He chaired the Society's Planning sub-committee for a great many years, standing down in 2021. His love of Rochester and wealth of knowledge regarding planning was invaluable to the work of our widely well-regarded planning team. John's enthusiastic involvement was greatly appreciated by all of us and his retirement from the team left a large gap. We are now building up the Planning sub-committee to a strength we believe he would have approved and we remain indebted to his interest and commitment.

Reports of sub-committees and officers

2. Festivals sub-committee Ian Smith

- 2.1** Last year's Craft Fair (2023) was a little different from previous years, due to Medway Council evicting the Craft Fair from the Castle gardens and moving us to the moat. Several meetings between the City of Rochester Society and Medway Council took place to discuss the reason for the move and the implications.
- 2.2** The result of all the discussions was that we could only have 17 stalls (previously we had 42 per weekend) and stall holders had to remove their stock at the end of each trading weekend. We ended up having a total of 54 stalls over the three weekends. This included two charity stalls and one stall hosting two different stalls.
- 2.3** James O'Donoghue, the new Craft Fair Organiser, was introduced to the stall holders and was well-received by all. Following the event, James sent out a questionnaire to those taking part and the comments received by James showed that the City of Rochester Society came out of the consultation very well but the Council did not.
- 2.4** We are already in discussion with Medway Council for Christmas 2024 and when details are available these will appear in the Society's Newsletter.
- 2.5** Attendance figures for the whole trading period are not available but the Council have indicated a total figure of 240,000.
- 2.6** Finally, 2023 was my final Craft Fair as organiser and I would like to thank all those from the Society who have helped and supported me, to all stall holders past and present for supporting the Craft Fair over the years and finally to James for picking up the baton as Craft Fair Organiser and I wish him well for the future.

3. Finance & General Purposes sub-committee Rob Flood

- 3.1** This sub-committee comprises the Society's Trustees (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary). The Trustees have remained in regular contact this year, via both email and telephone, to discuss matters of finance and issues which do not fit easily

into other categories. Recommendations or proposals may be put to the Executive committee from time to time as a result of such discussions.

4. Planning sub-committee

Paul Anderson

- 4.1** This report covers the period from the previous one, i.e. from April 2023 until March 2024. I am pleased to report that our Planning sub-committee goes from strength to strength. The sub-committee has benefited this year from the addition of Rosie Beattie as a member, adding to the experienced team of Alan Moss, John Hill, Chris Webb, Nina Robinson, Chris Furminger and Paul Anderson. Rosie brings deep knowledge of the St Margaret's Banks area of Rochester.
- 4.2** With a large team, inevitably conflicts of interest can arise from time to time. It is important to note that in the case of conflicts of interest, or perceived conflicts of interest, the relevant sub-committee member or members will declare the interest, then absent themselves from discussions of that item, while the remainder of the group then forms an independent view. An example of an item under discussion this year which fell into this category was the "Rochester Triangle" site, where Paul Anderson took no part in discussions.
- 4.3** The Planning sub-committee continues to focus specifically on planning proposals which impinge on "our" area – in effect within what used to be the old City of Rochester wards. The aim for the sub-committee is to give constructive feedback to planning proposals and consultations, so as to best preserve and enhance the City for current and future inhabitants and visitors. With the help of Chris Webb's experience in Licensing matters, the sub-committee is also keeping an eye on applications, and raising concerns/requesting clarifications where deemed necessary.
- 4.4** The Planning sub-committee receives a weekly list of all planning applications from Medway Council which we digest and comment upon, as appropriate.
- 4.5** Over the last year, there have been a number of high-profile developments that have gone to planning, some of which have been subsequently changed, resubmitted, etc. Where appropriate, the Planning sub-committee has formed a view and written a formal response to Medway Council for consideration.
- 4.6** The minimum number of letters of objection needed to trigger a hearing by Medway Council's full Planning Committee has been raised from three to five, meaning that fewer planning applications will in future be considered by that Committee. It is therefore more important now for written objections to be submitted by members if they want applications to be considered by the Committee rather than by a Planning Officer.
- 4.7** The major proposals considered this year have included the initial plans for Strood Waterfront (where the single point of vehicular access on to the A2 has been highlighted as a major concern), the raised deck at the rear of Ye Arrow (the sub-committee viewed this as inappropriate location for such a structure) and the infill development next to the old NatWest Bank at 38-40 High Street, Rochester (where comments were made on the detailing of the proposal).
- 4.8** Many other smaller, but no less significant, schemes have also been considered, and

where felt appropriate, the Planning sub-committee has submitted a response, e.g. to the plans for 255-257 High Street, Rochester regarding a change from a “dwelling house” to a “house of multiple occupation”, as well as making various comments regarding, in the sub-committee’s opinion, the inappropriate use of UPVC double-glazed units in renovations of historic buildings.

- 4.9 In the St Margaret’s Banks area, an objection was written regarding the retrospective application for a subterranean basement excavation for which there were structural worries for the property itself and its immediate neighbours. The sub-committee has expressed its extreme concerns about the state of the historic wall holding back the ground to the right when going up The Cut from Delce Road to City Way. Councillors have been flagged regarding the poor state of a couple of vacated properties, most notably the units between Boots and Iceland, on Strood High Street.
- 4.10 Previously considered schemes at Bardell Wharf and the former Grays Garage, both on the High Street, have shown little progress. The lack of enforcement of the planning violation at the City Wall Wine Bar has also been pursued. At the time of writing, the covered structure has at last been removed. Concerns have also been communicated to Medway Council regarding an historic right of way in that area that seems have been ignored by the owner of the land, and which continues to be impacted by the remaining planters, seating, etc. Feedback has also been submitted regarding shopfront planning at the Vape Shop opposite La Providence, which appears to the sub-committee to be totally out of character for the area.
- 4.11 Other significant items that have been discussed have been the ongoing derelict state of Rochester Pier, and the importance of getting the Society involved in the development of the Draft River Strategy that was due to be developed by Medway Council.
- 4.12 Once again, the Planning sub-committee has considered potential schemes for the annual City of Rochester Society Conservation Award. This year, two developments really stood out, both of them Public Houses. The two schemes flagged up were The Ship Inn restoration on Rochester’s High Street/Intra area, and The Royal Crown renovation on the junction of the High Street and the Esplanade. The sub-committee found it difficult to choose between the two developments, and therefore agreed that both schemes be recommended to the Executive committee for two awards to be made again.

5. Publishing, Publicity and Events sub-committee

Rob Flood

- 5.1 The Publishing, Publicity and Events sub-committee did not meet en masse this year although we stayed in touch via email and I have met individually with Phil Dodd and Alan Moss to discuss certain projects. Alan Moss has continued to work tirelessly to bring us our quarterly Newsletter, ably assisted by our printer Jon Barker.
- 5.2 With thanks to Phil Dodd, we managed to publish our excellent calendar. The 2024 theme celebrated the ‘best of Rochester’.
- 5.3 I’m delighted that we were able to publish ‘*Hidden Histories – The Stories of 100 Medway Women*’ by Medway Archives Centre’s Senior Archivist, Helen Worthy. This is a wonderful piece of work and if you haven’t yet bought a copy, I really recommend it.

6. Tours sub-committee

James O'Donoghue

- 6.1** Geoff Ettridge assumed responsibility from Martin Dodsworth as the Society's booked tour co-ordinator in July 2023.
- 6.2** In the calendar year 2023, 30 booked tours were undertaken. A total of 637 visitors attended these tours, raising £2,812 for the Society.
- 6.3** The individual charge for a booked tour remains at £5 per person with a minimum charge of £30. The Society makes no charge for tours arranged by local schools for their pupils. A charge is made if the tour has been arranged via a tour company.
- 6.4** The Society continued with its model of free open tours on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, plus tours during the summer and Christmas Dickens Festivals and Christmas Markets. Voluntary donations are always welcome at the end of the tours, made to the registered charity of *The City of Rochester Society*. In 2023, 570 visitors attended, raising £1,916.22 for the Society.
- 6.5** During 2023, John Bradshaw organised and conducted two 'special tours' with support from Rosemary Dymond and Terri Zbyszewska. The '*Mystery of Edwin Drood*' tour was attended by three visitors and raised £70 in donations for The Dickens Chalet Fund. The tour of the '*Forts of the Medway Towns*' was attended by 9 visitors, raising £45 for the Society.

7. Members' meetings

Christine Furminger

- 7.1** I am pleased to report that members' meetings this year have been very successful. Following last year's AGM, our first meeting took place on the afternoon of 10 October in the Bridge Chapel of Rochester Bridge Trust. This combined talk discussed the work of the Chief Finance Officer, the Chief Estates Officer and the Education Manager in "*A year in the life of the Trust*" who shared some fascinating 'behind the scenes' details with us regarding the work of this unique organisation.
- 7.2** In November, we became familiar with our new meetings venue - The Vines Church. The church hall building stands to the rear of the original church in Crow Lane. Some members may recall it was previously known as Belsey Hall. While entrance for pedestrians can be gained from Crow Lane, the building has the benefit of its own secure car park with an entrance from Victoria Street and The Terrace, plus an excellent kitchen, screens and a sound system.
- 7.3** The November afternoon meeting was closely followed by another in the evening, enabling our working members to attend. Executive committee member Terry Clennell has been focusing on the Society's future and plans for progress and as much input from members as possible was, and is, required. The outcome of these discussions and an accompanying questionnaire is being analysed. We look forward with interest to Terry's report in due course.
- 7.4** In December, we enjoyed a visit from Rochester Choral Society who entertained us with a variety of songs and carols and then stayed to share seasonal refreshments with us.

- 7.5 In February, in a departure from the advertised programme, Geoff Ettridge talked to us about *“Richard Watts – a Man of his time, a Charity of its time”*. Geoff is an experienced local walking tour guide and can be relied upon for his excellent research for his talks.
- 7.6 In March, we welcomed Philip Badman, Secretary to Halling Historical Society. Philip provided an interesting talk on *“The History of Halling”*. Many members were unaware that the little local church of St John the Baptist houses some of the most wonderful medieval wall paintings to be found in the country, or that the remains of a Bishop’s Palace adjoins it.
- 7.7 Dave Burton gave us a fascinating talk in April, focusing on “Aveling & Porter”. Beginning with Thomas Aveling’s early inventions he led us through the development of Wingets steam rollers. His slideshow included images from a rare set of glass plate photographs and he accompanied his talk with some beautifully constructed models.
- 7.8 Another speaker alteration in May resulted in a welcome return visit from David Carder. David’s wide research always results in interesting talks to which we can relate. “Life in the Workhouse” was no exception, and information about these old buildings, many of which still remain and are close to home, was both chilling and fascinating.
- 7.9 Members meetings will continue at the Vines Church for the foreseeable future – it is proving to be a comfortable venue, where members can enjoy both afternoon and evening meetings.

8. Treasurer Barbara Fisher

- 8.1 The Independent Examiners have completed their work and no problems were identified.
- 8.2 We ended 2023 with a surplus of income over expenditure of £1,508. However, this was only achieved with the revaluation of profit on investments. The net income shows a loss of £4,174 most of which arose out of the loss on Craft Fairs.
- 8.3 The Craft Fairs held in 2023 made a loss of £2,869. This was due to Medway Council changing the relationship with the Society whereby they only allowed our stalls in the Moat.
- 8.4 Donations of £5,163 were received from our popular guided tours and £2,976 was received from the sale of publications.
- 8.5 With the exception of publications, costs were similar to 2022.

9. Membership Secretary Rosemary Clemence

- 9.1 Membership as at 31 March 2024 stands at 470, which takes account of those moved away or some who have not renewed their subscriptions, together with deaths.
- 9.2 I am pleased to report 22 new members including several life members.
- 9.3 Each year I send out quite a lot of letters to those members who have forgotten to renew

their subscription and this is obviously costly to the Society. It would be far easier for the Treasurer if more people paid by standing order - a form is available, and renewing online would be even easier. This would also mean that you have one thing less to remember. If you have an e-mail address, please let me have it so you may receive any necessary notifications.

10. Society Grants

Barbara Fisher

- 10.1** The Society was pleased to provide financial support during the 2023 year for one community project.
- 10.2** We were able to assist Medway Open Studios with sponsorship in the sum of £750.00 for their Arts Festival.

11. Website and Social Media

Rob Flood

- 11.1** The Society's on-line presence in 2023/2024 has continued to be an important way for the public to interact with us.
- 11.2** Our website - city-of-rochester.org.uk - continues to receive good traffic. James O'Donoghue is now helping with website updates.
- 11.3** Our MailChimp posts have been slightly more regular, primarily as a tool to promote our task programme.
- 11.4** On X (formerly Twitter), the Society's account @CORochesterSoc still sits at just over 2,700 followers.
- 11.5** Our Facebook account has grown again to 1,690 followers with 1,467 people liking the page.

Reports of Society representatives on other organisations

12. Civic Voice

Rob Flood

- 12.1** The Society remains affiliated to Civic Voice, the umbrella organisation for civic societies, which was founded following the demise of the Civic Trust in 2009. Civic Voice has a significant role in the world of amenity societies and has a voice in Parliament through the All Party Parliamentary Group for Civic Societies.
- 12.2** Civic Voice has continued to offer remote talks in addition to actual meetings.

13. Medway Tourism Association (MTA)

James O'Donoghue

- 13.1** The Medway Tourism Association incorporates a wide range of organisations engaged in the leisure and tourist industries in the Medway Towns. There is also input from

representatives from Visit Kent and Medway Council. Councillor Harinder Mahil is the portfolio holder.

- 13.2** A meeting took place on 3 October 2023. A new informal and relaxed approach has been adopted with the focus on networking and presentations from stakeholders. There were presentations on several topics, including the community-led regeneration scheme in Chatham Intra and art and culture as a tourism asset.
- 13.3** It was pleasing to note that the tourism industry is getting back on track with visitor numbers returning to pre-pandemic levels.
- 13.4** It is not known, at the time of writing, if there will be a new MTA focus, following the closure of The Visitor Information Centre in Rochester on 19 April 2024.

14. Rochester City Centre Forum (RCCF) Alan Moss/Rob Flood

- 14.1** The Society continues to be represented at meetings of the RCCF, a non-political coming together of Rochester traders, community groups and residents to discuss the well-being of the city centre. The forum is chaired by Sarah Tranter, and the Society's Chairman is a member of the forum's management committee. The Society's President has attended most meetings.
- 14.2** Among the forum's initiatives has been the establishment of the monthly Rochester City Artisan Market, which continues to flourish, together with the floral displays in the baskets and planters along the High Street.
- 14.3** The forum meetings provide an opportunity for members to hear from, and to question, representatives of bodies involved in, for example, law-enforcement, the care of the homeless and the licenced trade.

15. Dickens Chalet Stakeholder Group Alan Moss

- 15.1** This group was set up in 2021 following Medway Council's appointment of Rachel Kerr as the project co-ordinator for the repair and restoration of the Dickens Chalet. The group includes representatives of this Society, the Friends of Eastgate House and the Rochester and Chatham Dickens Fellowship.
- 15.2** Medway Council's Head of Culture & Libraries, Paul Cowell, has now taken over responsibility from the Council's Heritage team for the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Priority Place initiative.
- 15.3** It is hoped that a stakeholder get-together will be organised shortly, the May meeting having been postponed due to illness.

.....
Secretary

.....
Chairman

.....2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

I report to the charity trustees ("the Executive committee") on my examination of the accounts of The City of Rochester Society ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on the following pages.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Executive committee of the Charity, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). I report in respect of my examination of the Executive committee's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Richard Abel FCA CTA
Aggarwal & Co Ltd, Chartered Accountants
5 London Road
Rainham
Kent
ME8 7RG

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
INCOME			
Income from charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		18,910	37,205
- Subscriptions		2,285	2,895
- Life membership		200	300
- Income from meetings, outings, etc.		430	454
- Income from tours		5,163	3,566
- Sale of publications		2,976	2,188
		<u>29,964</u>	<u>46,608</u>
Donations and legacies		174	380
Investment income		839	115
TOTAL INCOME		<u>30,977</u>	<u>47,103</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Expenditure on charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		21,779	20,353
- Costs of meetings and book club		497	484
- Cost of tours		385	233
- Publications		4,078	870
- Newsletter printing		4,172	3,953
- Grants and sponsorship		750	2,250
		<u>31,661</u>	<u>28,143</u>
Other costs			
- Committee and AGM expenses		856	1,123
- Affiliations and subscriptions		532	554
- Insurance		75	75
- Website costs and amortisation		644	663
- Independent examiner's fee		528	510
- Other costs		875	180
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>35,151</u>	<u>31,248</u>
NET INCOME		<u>(4,174)</u>	<u>15,855</u>
Loss on revaluation of investments (2022 : profit)	6	5,682	(2,016)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		<u>1,508</u>	<u>13,839</u>
Total funds brought forward		104,809	90,970
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>106,317</u>	<u>104,809</u>

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities and are unrestricted

funds.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2023				
	Notes	2023		2022
		£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS				
- Intangible fixed assets	7		500	1,000
- Investments	8		46,630	40,948
			<u>47,130</u>	<u>41,948</u>
CURRENT ASSETS				
- Stocks		3,413		4,824
- Debtors and prepayments		399		305
- Investments - cash equivalents on deposit		9,221		9,221
- Cash at bank and in hand		49,719		51,379
		<u>62,752</u>		<u>65,729</u>
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within 1 year				
- Creditors and accrued expenses		658		598
- Deferred income		2,912		2,270
		<u>3,565</u>		<u>2,868</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			59,187	62,861
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			<u>106,317</u>	<u>104,809</u>
007				
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY				
Unrestricted funds				
- General funds	9		102,066	101,802
- Designated funds	9		4,251	3,007
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS			<u>106,317</u>	<u>104,809</u>

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Executive Committee on 16 April 2024 and signed on their behalf

Mr R Flood
Chairman

Mrs B Fisher
Treasurer

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

1. STATUTORY INFORMATION

The City of Rochester Society is an unincorporated association registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Charity's registered number and registered office address can be found within the Trustees' Report.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of accounting

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)", Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the inclusion of investments at fair value.

(b) Going Concern

When preparing the financial statements, the Trustees have assessed whether there are significant doubts about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. There are no material uncertainties of which the Trustees are aware in making their assessment.

The Trustees consider that the charity has sufficient cash reserves to enable it to meet its obligations as they fall due for a period of at least 12 months from the date of signing of these financial statements. As such, the Trustees are satisfied that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future and they continue to adopt the going concern basis for preparing these financial statements.

(c) Income and debtors

Voluntary income, which includes donations, gifts and legacies, and fundraising income are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Life subscriptions are taken to income at £10 per member per year, the balance of monies received being carried forward to future years as deferred income.

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis and arises from interest bearing deposit accounts.

Income from charitable activities includes monies for the Society's craft fairs, subscriptions, tours, meetings and sale of the Society's publications. All amounts exclude value added tax.

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

(d) Volunteers and donated services and facilities

No value is incorporated into these financial statements for the services provided by volunteers or where services are provided to the charity as a donation that would normally be purchased from suppliers.

(e) Expenditure and liabilities

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Grant payments are recognised when a liability or constructive obligation arises that results in the payment being unavoidable.

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the Society's craft fairs, tours, meetings and newsletters.

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for good or services it must provide.

(f) Investments

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. The statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluation and disposals throughout the year.

(g) Other financial instruments

The charity enters into basic financial instruments that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other accounts receivable and payable, loans to and from banks, and other third parties. Basic financial instruments are recognised at amortised cost, with changes recognised in the statement of financial activities.

(h) Intangible fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided on all intangible fixed assets at a rate calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life, which is deemed to be three years.

(i) Stocks

Stocks are included at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Stocks consists of publications for resale.

(j) Funds structure

The charity has no restricted funds. Some of the unrestricted income funds have been designated to be for special purposes by the Executive committee.

3. TRUSTEE REMUNERATION

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits for the current or preceding year.

4. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There are no related party transactions in the current year or previous year.

5. TAXATION

The Society is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

6. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Website costs	£	
Cost - at 1 January and 31 December 2023	<u>1,500</u>	
Depreciation		
- at 1 January 2023		-
Charge for year	<u>500</u>	
- at 31 December 2023	<u>500</u>	
	<u>1,000</u>	
Net book values		
- at 31 December 2023	<u>500</u>	
- at 31 December 2022	<u>1,000</u>	

7. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Market value at beginning of the year	40,948	42,964
Net loss on revaluation (2022: Loss)	<u>5,682</u>	<u>(2,016)</u>
Market value at end of year	<u>46,630</u>	<u>40,948</u>

Investment comprises a global growth OEIC fund.

8. STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

	General funds	Designated funds	Total
	£	£	£
Balance at 1 January 2023	101,802	3,007	104,809
Income	29,733	1,244	30,977
Expenditure	(35,151)	-	(35,151)
Loss on investments	<u>5,682</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,682</u>
Balance at 31 December 2023	<u>102,066</u>	<u>4,251</u>	<u>106,317</u>

The funds held at the year-end date are as follows:

Fixed assets	47,130	-	47,130
Cash	45,468	4,251	49,719
Net other current assets	<u>9,468</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,468</u>
Total funds	<u>102,066</u>	<u>4,251</u>	<u>106,317</u>

The designated funds are held in relation to repairs or conservation work to the Dickens' Swiss Chalet, which is situated currently in the gardens of Eastgate House, Rochester. The Executive committee have decided that sales of a particular publication and special tours should be set aside for such purpose.

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

RULES AND CONSTITUTION

Charity Registration No 252603

June 2017

RULES AND CONSTITUTION OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

- 1. Name.** The name of the Society shall be “The City of Rochester Society”.
- 2. Objectives.** The objectives of the Society shall be to promote:
 - (a) public interest in and care for the beauty, history and character of Rochester and its surroundings;
 - (b) the development of a live, modern community, with the highest standards of architecture and planning;
 - (c) interest in cultural activities;
 - (d) the re-instatement of Rochester’s city status;
 - (e) other features of general amenity, including preservation, conservation and education, for the benefit of both residents and visitors; and to do all such lawful acts and things as are incidental to the attainment of the objectives of the Society. It may, if it deems it fit, do such acts or things in conjunction with any person, body, institution, authority or otherwise.
- 3. Membership.** Membership of the Society shall be open to all who are interested in the aims of the Society and shall be in the following categories: life membership, yearly membership (adult), yearly membership (junior) – for those under 19 years of age, yearly membership (corporate). Membership shall lapse if the full subscription is unpaid by 31st July in the relevant year. The executive committee may also elect honorary members as it deems appropriate. Honorary members shall not be required to pay a subscription.
- 4. Subscription.** The rate of subscription shall be as recommended by the executive committee and approved by a majority of members present at an annual or special general meeting. A new member joining the Society and paying the first subscription between 1st January and 31st March in any year shall not be required to pay a further subscription until 1st April in the following year. Otherwise, all yearly membership subscriptions shall be renewed on 1st April. The Society shall have power to accept donations for any purpose not inconsistent with its aims.
- 5. Meetings.** An annual general meeting shall be held, on a date appointed by the executive committee, between 1st May and 30th June of each year, to receive the executive committee’s report and audited accounts and to elect members of the said committee. The committee shall decide when members meetings of the Society shall be held and shall give at least fourteen days’ notice of such meetings to all members.

Special general meetings of the Society shall be held at the request of ten or more members. Thirty members personally present shall constitute a quorum for a general meeting of the Society. Corporate members shall be entitled to send two delegates, each delegate entitled to one vote, to the annual or special general meeting of the Society.

- 6. Management of the Society.** The management of the Society shall be vested in an executive committee consisting of a chairman, vice-chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary and up to seven other members.

The executive committee may appoint other members of the society to serve on the executive committee, but without voting rights.

The executive committee may also appoint other members of the society as officers, in addition to those defined above, but without voting rights. The executive committee shall decide whether such additional officers shall be required to attend meetings of the executive committee.

Five members of the committee shall constitute a quorum provided that one of that number is an officer of the Society.

The chairman, vice chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary shall constitute the trustees of the society.

- 7. Committee.** The Society shall, at every annual general meeting, elect individually the four officers as defined in rule 6 and up to seven other members to constitute the committee for the ensuing year. The executive committee shall take office at the end of the meeting at which they are elected and shall hold office until the end of the next annual general meeting.

Members of the executive committee may be re-elected for a further term or terms of office, save for the four elected officers, as qualified in rule 8.

The executive committee shall determine the upper spending limit that each of the sub-committees defined in rule 9 may be permitted to spend on their own authority on individual purchases and transactions, though not as a component of a project or item which would in total exceed the permitted upper limit of spending.

- 8. Election of officers.** The chairman, vice chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary shall serve for a period of time not exceeding the following:

Chairman and vice-chairman – three years;
Honorary treasurer – seven years;
Honorary secretary – five years.

If a nomination for any of the above positions is not forthcoming before the date of the annual general meeting, the above periods of office may be extended by a maximum of two years, subject to the approval of the annual general meeting.

Members of the society who have served the permitted continuous period in any of the elected offices and are therefore debarred for re-nomination will qualify for nomination to that office after a period of at least two years.

The chairman, vice chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary shall form the finance and general purposes sub-committee of the executive committee and shall meet as required. It shall have authority to spend society funds when such a decision cannot await the next meeting of the executive committee.

9. Sub-committees. The executive committee shall create the following sub-committees for the efficient running of the society:

- Planning;
- Members meetings/events;
- Tours;
- Publications, Publicity and Promotions;
- Festivals.

The minimum size of respective sub-committees shall be three and each sub-committee may co-opt other members of the society who have special interests or skills which are deemed to be of benefit to the society, subject to the approval of the executive committee.

At its first meeting following the annual general meeting, the executive committee shall appoint an elected member of the executive committee to each sub-committee.

There shall be no limit on the number of sub-committees upon which an elected member of the executive committee or a member of the society may serve.

The chairman of the society shall be an ex-officio member of all sub-committees.

Each sub-committee shall elect its own chairman at its first meeting following the annual general meeting.

An elected member of the executive committee from each sub-committee shall report to the executive committee, usually in writing, on significant issues or when an executive committee decision is required. In the event that an elected member of the executive committee who is a member of the sub-committee is not available, then a substitute may attend and report to the executive committee, but without voting rights.

The executive committee may create working groups as necessary to undertake specific projects.

- 10. Election of President and Vice-Presidents.** A president may be elected at a general meeting of the Society. He or she shall serve in that capacity for a period of one year and shall be eligible for re-election for one or more further terms. One or more vice-presidents may be elected at a general meeting of the Society. Such vice-presidents shall be elected for life. The president and vice-presidents shall not be required to pay a subscription.
- 11. Appeals.** The executive committee shall have the power to make appeals, solicit donations and canvass monies for carrying out the objectives of the Society.
- 12. Expenses and administration.** The executive committee shall, out of monies received by the Society, pay all proper expenses for the management of the Society and shall use the residue of such monies as it thinks fit for or towards the objectives of the Society.
- 13. Investments.** All monies belonging to the Society at any time which are not immediately required for Society purposes shall be invested by the Trustees on behalf of the Society in such investments, securities or property as they consider fit, always complying with the requirements of the Charity Commission.
- 14. Borrowing.** The executive committee may borrow for the objectives of the Society such monies at such rate of interest and in such a manner as it may think fit, provided that the consent of a general meeting of the Society shall first be obtained.
- 15. Amendments.** The constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members present at an annual or special general meeting provided that ten days' notice of the proposed amendment has been sent to all members and provided that nothing therein contained shall authorise any amendment permitting the expenditure of funds of the Society on any object which is not a charitable object at law.
- 16. Winding up.** In the event of the winding up of the Society the available funds of the Society shall be transferred to such one or more charitable bodies, having objectives similar or reasonably similar to those herein before declared as may be chosen by the executive committee and approved by the Charity Commission.

Explanatory note

(This note does not form part of the Rules and Constitution)

The City of Rochester Society was founded in 1967. Its area of interest is that of the City of Rochester as it existed immediately prior to the reorganisation of local government in 1974, which may be described as the urban area of Rochester and Strood.

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
INCOME			
Income from charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		18,910	37,205
- Subscriptions		2,285	2,895
- Life membership		200	300
- Income from meetings, outings, etc.		430	454
- Income from tours		5,163	3,566
- Sale of publications		2,976	2,188
		<u>29,964</u>	<u>46,608</u>
Donations and legacies		174	380
Investment income		839	115
TOTAL INCOME		<u><u>30,977</u></u>	<u><u>47,103</u></u>
EXPENDITURE			
Expenditure on charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		21,779	20,353
- Costs of meetings and book club		497	484
- Cost of tours		385	233
- Publications		4,078	870
- Newsletter printing		4,172	3,953
- Grants and sponsorship		750	2,250
		<u>31,661</u>	<u>28,143</u>
Other costs			
- Committee and AGM expenses		836	1,123
- Affiliations and subscriptions		532	554
- Insurance		75	75
- Website costs and amortisation		644	663
- Independent examiner's fee		528	510
- Other costs		875	180
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u><u>35,151</u></u>	<u><u>31,248</u></u>
NET INCOME		(4,174)	15,855
Profit on revaluation of investments (2022 : Loss)	6	5,682	(2,016)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		<u>1,508</u>	<u>13,839</u>
Total funds brought forward		104,809	90,970
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>106,317</u></u>	<u><u>104,809</u></u>

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities and are unrestricted funds.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY
BALANCE SHEET
AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023		2022	
		£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Intangible fixed assets	6		500		1,000
Investments	7		46,630		40,948
			<u>47,130</u>		<u>41,948</u>
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stocks		3,413		4,824	
Debtors and prepayments		399		305	
Investments - cash equivalents on deposit		9,221		9,221	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>49,719</u>		<u>51,379</u>	
		<u>62,752</u>		<u>65,729</u>	
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within					
Creditors and accrued expenses		653		598	
Deferred income		<u>2,912</u>		<u>2,270</u>	
		<u>3,565</u>		<u>2,868</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			59,187		62,861
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			<u><u>106,317</u></u>		<u><u>104,809</u></u>
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY					
Unrestricted funds					
- General funds	8		102,066		101,802
- Designated funds	8		4,251		3,007
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS			<u><u>106,317</u></u>		<u><u>104,809</u></u>

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Executive Committee on 16 April 2024 and signed on their behalf

Mrs B Fisher

Treasurer

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 STATUTORY INFORMATION

The City of Rochester Society is an unincorporated association registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Charity's registered number and registered office address can be found within the Trustees' Report.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).

2 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of accounting

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)", Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the inclusion of investments at fair value.

(b) Going Concern

When preparing the financial statements, the Trustees have assessed whether there are significant doubts about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. There are no material uncertainties of which the Trustees are aware in making their assessment.

The Trustees consider that the charity has sufficient cash reserves to enable it to meet its obligations as they fall due for a period of at least 12 months from the date of signing of these financial statements. As such, the Trustees are satisfied that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future and they continue to adopt the going concern basis for preparing these financial statements.

(c) Income and debtors

Voluntary income, which includes donations, gifts and legacies, and fundraising income are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Life subscriptions are taken to income at £10 per member per year, the balance of monies received being carried forward to future years as deferred income.

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis and arises from interest bearing deposit accounts.

Income from charitable activities includes monies for the Society's craft fairs, subscriptions, tours, meetings and sale of the Society's publications. All amounts exclude value added tax.

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

(d) Volunteers and donated services and facilities

No value is incorporated into these financial statements for the services provided by volunteers or where services are provided to the charity as a donation that would normally be purchased from suppliers.

(e) Expenditure and liabilities

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Grant payments are recognised when a liability or constructive obligation arises that results in the payment being unavoidable.

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the Society's craft fairs, tours, meetings and newsletters.

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for good or services it must provide.

(f) Investments

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. The statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluation and disposals throughout the year.

(g) Other financial instruments

The charity enters into basic financial instruments that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other accounts receivable and payable, loans to and from banks, and other third parties. Basic financial instruments are recognised at amortised cost, with changes recognised in the statement of financial activities.

(h) Intangible fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided on all intangible fixed assets at a rate calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life, which is deemed to be three years.

(i) Stocks

Stocks are included at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Stocks consists of publications for resale.

(j) Funds structure

The charity has no restricted funds. Some of the unrestricted income funds have been designated to be for special purposes by the Executive committee.

3 TRUSTEE REMUNERATION

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits for the current or preceding year.

4 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There are no related party transactions in the current year or previous year.

5 TAXATION

The Society is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

6 INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Website costs

	£
Cost	
- at 1 January and 31 December 2023	<u>1,500</u>
Depreciation	
- at 1 January 2023	500
- charge for year	<u>500</u>
- at 31 December 2023	<u>1,000</u>
Net book values	
- at 31 December 2023	<u><u>500</u></u>
- at 31 December 2022	<u><u>1,000</u></u>

7 FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Market value at beginning of the year	40,948	42,964
Net gain on revaluation (2022 : Loss)	<u>5,682</u>	<u>(2,016)</u>
Market value at end of year	<u><u>46,630</u></u>	<u><u>40,948</u></u>

Investment comprise a global growth OEIC fund.

8 STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

	General funds £	Designated funds £	Total £
Balance at 1 January 2023	101,802	3,007	104,809
Income	29,733	1,244	30,977
Expenditure	(35,151)	-	(35,151)
Gain on investments	5,682	-	5,682
Balance at 31 December 2023	<u><u>102,066</u></u>	<u><u>4,251</u></u>	<u><u>106,317</u></u>

The funds held at the year-end date are as follows:

- Fixed assets	47,130	-	47,130
- Cash	45,468	4,251	49,719
- Net other current assets	9,468	-	9,468
- Total funds	<u><u>102,066</u></u>	<u><u>4,251</u></u>	<u><u>106,317</u></u>

The designated funds are held in relation to repairs or conservation work to the Dickens' Swiss Chalet, which is situated currently in the gardens of Eastgate House, Rochester. The Executive committee have decided that sales of a particular publication and special tours should be set aside for such purpose.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**

I report to the charity trustees ("the Executive committee") on my examination of the accounts of The City of Rochester Society ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on the following pages.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Executive committee of the Charity, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Executive committee's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Richard Abel

Richard Abel FCA CTA
Aggarwal & Co Ltd
Chartered Accountants

29 August 2024

5 London Road
Rainham
Gillingham
Kent, ME8 7RG

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 252603

Accounts

The City of Rochester Society

The Annual General Meeting of the City of Rochester Society

will be held at

THE GUILDHALL, HIGH STREET, ROCHESTER

on

WEDNESDAY 28 JUNE 2023

at 7.30 for 8.00 pm

Please bring this booklet with you to the AGM. It contains:

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The Minutes of the 53rd AGM held on Wednesday 29 June 2022	4
The Annual Report for 2022/23	6
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Rules and Constitution 2017 (for information)	21

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 54th Annual General Meeting of the City of Rochester Society will be held in the Court Room of the Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester at 8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 28 June 2023.

A G E N D A

1. To receive apologies for absence.
2. To approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 29 June 2022 and to consider any matters arising from that meeting which are not covered elsewhere on this agenda. A copy of the minutes accompanies this agenda.
3. To receive the report of the Executive Committee for the year 2022/23, a copy of which also accompanies this agenda, and to discuss any matters arising from it.
4. To approve the accounts for the financial year 2022/23.
5. To elect a President of the Society.
6. To elect the officers of the Society: -
 - (i) Chairman;
 - (ii) Vice Chairman;
 - (iii) Honorary Treasurer;
 - (iv) Honorary Secretaryincluding holding ballots if necessary.
7. To elect up to seven members of the Executive Committee including the holding of a ballot if necessary.
8. Any other business, during which members may raise points for discussion upon any aspect of the Society's activities or policies.

Addendums to the Agenda

Item 4 above: A summary of the accounts forms part of the Executive Committee's report. Copies of the final accounts, which will be presented for members' approval at the AGM, may be obtained after 1st June from the Hon Treasurer, Jean Skilling at the address given in the Society's Newsletter or by email: Jean.Skilling@blueyonder.co.uk

- Item 6 above:** **Nominations for election as an officer of the Society are invited.** Any member wishing to be considered for election as an officer of the Society should complete the enclosed nomination paper, indicating which post they are standing for, and return it to the Secretary at the address or email address given in the Society's Newsletter to arrive no later than two days before the AGM.
- Item 7 above:** **Nominations for membership of the Executive Committee are invited.** Any member wishing to be considered for election to the Executive Committee should complete the enclosed nomination paper, indicating which post they are standing for, and return it to the Secretary at the address or email address given in the Society's Newsletter to arrive no later than two days before the AGM.
- Item 8 above:** If members wish to raise matters of substance requiring the gathering of information it would be helpful if they could advise the Secretary in writing in advance of the meeting.

**Minutes of the 53rd Annual General Meeting of the City of Rochester Society
held in the Court Room of the Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester
at 8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 29 June 2022**

The number present at the meeting was 37. The President and the Chairman were unable to attend and the Vice Chairman, Paul Anderson, conducted the meeting in their absence. He was ably supported by Vice President, John Allison. It is hoped to return to the practice of inviting special guests again next year.

The Vice Chairman welcomed members and outlined the course of events for the evening.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from the following members:

Rob Flood, Elaine Gardner, Bob Howe, Angela Howe, Alan Moss, Pam Moss, Andy Ratcliffe, Simon Shreeve, Cllr. Stuart Tranter.

2. Minutes of the first Special General Meeting held on 13 October 2021

The minutes of the first Special General Meeting held on Wednesday 13 October 2021 were within the booklet containing the Annual Report which had been circulated to members. The minutes were agreed as a true record, duly endorsed and signed by the Vice Chairman.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Annual Report of the Executive Committee

The Annual Report had been distributed in conjunction with the May *Newsletter*. It was endorsed by members present and signed by the Vice Chairman.

5. Finance

The accounts for the year 2021/22, which had been signed off by the independent examiners, were presented by the Treasurer. The Treasurer remarked that the Society continued to benefit greatly from income received from the craft fairs. The proposals that the end of the financial year should be altered from the end of March to the end of September and that the Society's independent examiners should be changed to the firm of Aggarwal & Co. of London Road, Rainham were duly endorsed by members.

The Treasurer added that she would be standing down at the end of the current financial year and invited members interested in succeeding her to make contact as soon as possible.

6. The President and Society Officers

The Executive Committee had proposed that Alan Moss should be invited to remain as President of the Society for a further year and this proposal was unanimously agreed. The four

officers of the Executive Committee, who will also act as Society Trustees, are:

Chairman:	Rob Flood
Vice Chairmen:	Paul Anderson
Honorary Treasurer:	Jean Skilling
Honorary Secretary:	Christine Furminger

Five other members were appointed to the Executive Committee for the coming year:

Odette Buchanan
Terry Clennell
Martin Dodsworth
James O'Donoghue
Ian Smith.

7. Any other business

Society Reorganisation

It was reported that the Executive Committee was holding discussions on behalf of the Society regarding reorganisation and assessment, which were being overseen by Terry Clennell. This project had begun with a series of Zoom meetings and it was proposed that membership views would be sought in due course.

Members meetings

The Secretary apologised for the fact that members' meetings were not being arranged at present. She was moving back to the area shortly and would then be in a better position to organise these but more assistance was needed from members to assist with duties such as setting up and providing refreshments and it was hoped to organise a rota of helpers.

Rochester Craft Fairs

John Allison gave a speech of thanks on behalf of the President and Chairman at the close of business. He thanked Paul Anderson for stepping into the breach and conducting the meeting with great ability. He also thanked the Executive committee for their hard work during difficult times and Rosemary Clemence for continuing her vital role as Membership Secretary. He particularly emphasised the Society's gratitude to Ian Smith for running the increasingly successful craft fairs which continued to support and maintain the Society's healthy bank balance. Ian was stepping down from his role as Craft Fair Organiser at Christmas but thankfully a successor had at last been found and a handover period was due to begin.

There being no further business, the meeting drew to a close and members re-grouped in the Members Room, adjoining the Court Hall, to enjoy an opportunity to socialise with the aid of a raffle organised by Eileen Allison and light refreshments organised by Sarah and Paul Anderson.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

2022/23

President: Alan Moss

Vice-Presidents:

John Allison Derek Barnard Robert Howe Colin Whyman

Executive Committee – 2022/23

Chairman: Rob Flood

Vice-Chairman: Paul Anderson

Treasurer: Jean Skilling

Secretary: Christine Furminger

Odette Buchanan
Terry Clennell

Martin Dodsworth
Ian Smith

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3. Finance and General Purposes sub-committee
4. Planning sub-committee
5. Publishing, Publicity and Events sub-committee
6. Tours sub-committee
7. Members' meetings
8. Treasurer
9. Membership Secretary
10. Society Grants
11. Website and Social Media

Reports of Society representatives on other organisations

12. Civic Voice
13. Medway Tourism Association
14. Rochester City Centre Forum
15. Dickens Chalet Stakeholder Group

Introduction

This report of the Society's activities over the past year is presented for members' approval. Any matters concerning the report should be addressed to:

The Secretary, 165 High Street, Halling, Rochester, Kent ME2 1BT

1. Chairman's Report

Rob Flood

- 1.1 Welcome to our 2022-23 annual reports. I hope that many of you will find the time to read through and we always welcome your comments.
- 1.2 Although the early part of 2022 saw the official end of Covid restrictions, we are still feeling the effects of the restrictions in some quarters and have seen a marked decrease in the numbers of our members stepping forward to volunteer.
- 1.3 Executive committee member Terry Clennell (also the Chair of the Friends of Rochester Churchfields and Esplanade) has continued his work looking at the purpose and scope of the Society and our activities. We expect to consult with the wider membership at some point over the forthcoming year.
- 1.4 I was delighted that the Summer Dickens and Dickensian Christmas Festivals were able to take place again. My gratitude goes to Ian Smith and John Allison for their sterling work in ensuring the Craft Fair was a success, especially the Christmas fair where visitor numbers were at record levels.
- 1.5 As reported at last year's AGM, Ian Smith notified the Executive committee that the Christmas 2022 Craft Fair would be the last he will run as Craft Fair Organiser. Unfortunately, the person we hoped would be Ian's replacement has not been able to take on the role, so we find ourselves in the position of potentially being unable to facilitate the Craft Fairs in future. Ian has kindly stepped up to the plate for the 2023 summer and Christmas fairs.
- 1.6 The Craft Fair is a massively important part of the Society and creates most of the income that enables us to fulfil our charitable purposes as well as keep membership fees artificially low. So, I am appealing to our wider membership to find a person or persons who can take up the job. Please do contact me on info@city-of-rochester.org.uk if you're interested and would like further details.
- 1.7 If you think you may be able to assist, perhaps for a morning or afternoon - just an hour or two will be most useful - either before, during or after the event - please do get in touch with any member of the Executive committee. All and any help will be gratefully received. The Craft Fair is by far our biggest cash generator and allows us to do all the great things we do.
- 1.8 My thanks go to Christine who under very trying circumstances has managed to organise some great members meetings. I know these have not been as frequent as previously and some have been at relatively short notice but if you've managed to make it along to the Rochester Bridge Trust to listen to the brilliant Sue Threader or to hear Dr Jeremy Clarke talking about the Guildhall's Dickens collection, you'll know what a delight

these meetings are. Now that Christine is local('ish) again, I know she's working on a more extensive programme and we appreciate your support of these events.

- 1.9** I've continued to attend Civic Voice's excellent Zoom seminars around planning and design, and I hope we can take a greater role in the CV movement in the next year.
- 1.10** We've continued to participate, as the Society, with Medway Council and have taken a leading role within the Chatham Intra High Street Heritage Action Zone Area, half of which is in Rochester.
- 1.11** The Society continues to run free walking tours of Historic Rochester and my thanks goes to both John Bradshaw (open walks) and Martin Dodsworth (booked tours) and to our superb team of volunteer guides who continued their excellent work throughout the year. In March, John organised a brilliant 'Guides Day' at the Medway Archives Centre. This was followed by a fascinating tour of the English Martyr's Church in Frindsbury. Special thanks go to James O'Donoghue, press and publicity officer for the Tours sub-committee, for his sterling work spreading the word.
- 1.12** I'm delighted that we were able to resurrect our Conservation Award. Having postponed the award for Covid, this year we decided to present two awards for their outstanding contribution to conservation in Rochester over the previous 12 months. The first of these goes to Chatham House at 351 Rochester High Street. The exterior of the building has been restored to its Georgian splendour and is a tribute to the Featherstone family, Historic England, and Medway Council. The second award goes to the Rochester Bridge Trust for their stunning restoration of the Bridge Chapel and Chamber at 5 The Esplanade.
- 1.13** Once again, a big 'thank you' must go to our President and Newsletter Editor, Alan Moss. As ever, Alan has remained indefatigable in his approach and has produced great copies of our much-loved Newsletter against all the odds. Thanks also go to Phil Dodd for pulling the Society's 2023 calendar together.
- 1.14** I've been pleased to represent the Society at Medway Champions meetings and on the Steering Committee and Cultural Consortium for the Intra High Street Heritage Action Zone Area. We once again sponsored the 2022 Medway Open Studios event.
- 1.15** I would like to express my sincere thanks to Jean Skilling who is standing down as Treasurer at this AGM. Jean is a wonderfully skilled (no pun intended) accountant, and the Society has been in safe hands financially under her guidance.
- 1.16** Last, but by no means least, I want to express a debt of gratitude to everyone on the Executive committee. The energy and commitment of everyone involved continues to amaze and encourage me.

Reports of sub-committees and officers

2. Festivals sub-committee

Ian Smith

- 2.1** This last Christmas I have been advised by Medway Council that 245,000 people

attended Rochester for the Christmas Market, Craft Fair, etc. The Council are saying that it was the most successful Christmas event they had ever put on.

- 2.2 As usual the Craft Fair played its part and this year we were virtually 100% full on all three weekends. We had several stall holders attending for the first time and all were impressed with our professionalism in the way we issued invites and ran the whole event.
- 2.3 We had our usual variety of stalls including three charity stalls and all stall holders did as well if not better than in previous years.
- 2.4 You will have seen in the February Newsletter a photo of the presentation that was made to me by the stall holders, as this was my last Craft Fair in charge. I hand the batten over to James Gray who will be running the event in 2023.
- 2.5 I would like to thank those members of the Society who have helped me over the years as this event has grown from one weekend in the moat of Rochester Castle to three weekends.

3. Finance & General Purposes sub-committee

Rob Flood

- 3.1 This sub-committee comprises the Society's Trustees (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary). The Trustees have remained in regular contact this year, via both email and telephone, to discuss matters of finance and issues which do not fit easily into other categories. Recommendations or proposals may be put to the Executive committee from time to time as a result of such discussions.

4. Planning sub-committee

Paul Anderson

- 4.1 This report covers the period from the last annual report, i.e. from August 2022 to March 2023. I am pleased to record that the Planning sub-committee has been reformed after Covid and is meeting regularly once again after a period "in limbo" over lockdown.
- 4.2 The sub-committee has benefited from some new and relatively new additional members, namely Nina Robinson and Chris Webb, on top of the experienced team of Alan Moss, John Hill and Chris Furminger. Nina brings deep knowledge of the St Margaret's Banks area of Rochester, and Chris Webb has huge experience of the towns, with a focus on licensing. With the ongoing development of the commercial centre of Rochester, deep knowledge of licensing is a vital skill to have on the sub-committee.
- 4.3 As previously, members of the sub-committee have a specific focus on the planning proposals that impinge on "our" area – in effect within what was the old City of Rochester wards. The aim is to give constructive feedback to planning proposals and consultations, so as to best preserve and enhance our city for current and future inhabitants and visitors.
- 4.4 Over the last year, there have been a number of high-profile developments that have gone to planning, some of which have been subsequently changed, then resubmitted, etc. Where appropriate the sub-committee has formed a view and written a formal

response to Medway Council for consideration. The major proposals we have considered this year have been the Bardell Wharf development and the Grays Garage development. The lack of enforcement of the "Planning Violation" at the City Wall Wine Bar has also been pursued. Feedback has also been submitted regarding shopfront planning at the Chicken Shop (opposite Eastgate House) and regarding music and alcohol licensing at the relocated Chuck and Blade burger restaurant opposite the George Vaults.

- 4.5 Other important items that have been discussed have been the on-gong derelict state of Rochester Pier, and the importance of getting the Society involved in the development of the Draft River Strategy which was due to be developed by Medway Council.
- 4.6 With a recent change in political leadership at Medway Council - the Portfolio Holders are yet to be announced at the time of writing - the next few years promise to be interesting for the Planning sub-committee.
- 4.7 Finally, once again it was a duty of the sub-committee to consider potential schemes for the annual City of Rochester Society Conservation Awards. This year, two developments really stood out – the Bridge Chapel and Chamber restoration on the Esplanade, and the Chatham House renovation in the Old High Street, Intra. The sub-committee found it really difficult to choose between the two developments and was therefore delighted to recommend both schemes to the Executive committee for an award this year.

5. Publishing, Publicity and Events sub-committee

Rob Flood

- 5.1 The Publishing, Publicity and Events sub-committee met on a few occasions this year. Alan Moss has continued to work tirelessly to bring us our quarterly Newsletter, ably assisted by our printer Jon Barker.
- 5.2 With thanks to Philip Dodd, we managed to publish our excellent calendar. The 2023 theme celebrated our wonderful team of volunteer tour guides and our 40+ years of running free guided tours of Rochester.
- 5.3 We are currently working on the publication of a superb new book called 'Hidden Histories – The Stories of 100 Medway Women' by Medway Archives Centre Senior Archivist Helen Worthy. This a wonderful piece of work and I hope that it will be available to purchase at the AGM.

6. Tours sub-committee

Martin Dodsworth

- 6.1 This was our first full season since 2019 and we were once again able to offer open tours from April to October plus the Dickens Christmas Festival. We continue with the model we have had for many years of free open tours on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays with a voluntary donation at the end. In 2022 we guided 514 people on these tours and raised £1,728 for the Society.
- 6.2 Our booked tours, still at £5 per person, have been more affected by Covid and groups have been noticeably smaller with a clear reluctance on the part of many organisations to arrange for days out. Brexit has inevitably been incredibly negative for us and we

have lost all the European schools and colleges with which we had built up annual visits over the years. The booked tours had 389 customers and raised £1,475 for the Society.

- 6.3 We have continued to support the raising of funds for the Dickens Chalet Fund and special tours included a factual tour of "*Dickens and Rochester*" and a tour on "*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*".
- 6.4 A new venture, which we hope to repeat, was a tour of the forts of the Medway Towns. This was devised by John Bradshaw, and on what proved to be the hottest day of the year a small, intrepid group walked the 10 miles to visit 7 of the Georgian and Victorian forts!

7. Members' meetings

Christine Furminger

- 7.1 Organising members' meetings has not proved as straightforward as I hoped this year. By the time you read this, I hope some of you will have enjoyed two recent visits to the Bridge Chapel for talks. The first, on 27 March, featured Dr Jeremy Clarke, Education Officer at the Guildhall Museum who gave us "*An introduction to highlights and features of the new Charles Dickens Exhibition*".
- 7.2 On 16 May, Mrs Sue Threader, well known to Society members as the Bridge Clerk and Chief Executive of Rochester Bridge Trust, talked to us on "*The History of the Rochester Bridge Trust*". Sue always finds further interesting details to extend our knowledge of this aspect of Rochester's early development.
- 7.2 A further meeting, free to members, is booked on the afternoon of 10 October at the Bridge Chapel, with doors opening at 2.30 p.m. This is a new venture for Rochester Bridge Trust as well as for us! Sue Threader has invited members of her team (the Chief Finance Officer, the Chief Estates Officer and the Education Manager) to talk about their work in "*A year in the life of the Trust*", giving behind the scenes information on the running of this unique organisation. It promises to be really interesting, and there are still seats available – just give Alan Moss or me a call.
- 7.4 Beginning in September – and this is still a work in progress as I write – I plan for our meetings to take place at The Vines Church. The church hall stands to the rear of the original church in Crow Lane, previously known as the Belsey Hall. It has the benefit of a car park with an entrance from Victoria Street and The Terrace, an excellent kitchen, and a large screen (thus avoiding the need for our President to convey our own across town for future talks).
- 7.5 I have not forgotten about a coach trip, though I am finding coaches somewhat more expensive to hire for a group, particularly following all the upsets we have faced over the past few years. It may still happen and I do urge everyone to continue watching their copies of *Newsletter* for details of any upcoming event.

8. Treasurer

Jean Skilling

- 8.1 The new Independent Examiners have completed their work and no problems were identified. The layout of the accounts has been changed to comply with the latest

directions given by the Charity Commission.

8.2 We ended 2022 with a surplus of income over expenditure of £15,855.

8.3 The Craft Fairs held in 2022 raised £16,852 for Society funds.

8.4 Donations of £3,566 were received from our popular guided tours and £2,188 was received from the sale of publications.

8.5 With the exception of printing and posting our Newsletter, costs were similar to 2021.

8.6 The Society's investment in Scottish Widows is now included at market value (£40,948) rather than cost (£10,000) to comply with financial reporting standards.

9. Membership Secretary

Rosemary Clemence

9.1 Our membership number for the year is 465, one up on the previous year! This takes into account deaths, those moved away or who have not renewed their subscription. We had 26 new members including two juniors and several life members.

9.2 I always seem to send out quite a lot of letters to those members who have forgotten to renew their subscription and this is obviously costly to the Society. It would be far easier for the Treasurer if more people paid by standing order - a form is available. This would also mean you have one thing less to remember! If you have on-line banking, you can set up a standing order yourself by using the information provided. Whichever way you decide to help, please advise the Treasurer.

10. Society Grants

Jean Skilling

10.1 The Society was pleased to provide financial support during the 2022/23 year for two community projects.

10.2 We were able to assist Medway Open Studios with sponsorship in the sum of £750.00 for their Arts Festival. FoRCE (The Friends of Rochester, Churchfields & Esplanade) received a further sum of £1,500 to help complete a large garden project on Rochester Esplanade.

11. Website and Social Media

Rob Flood

11.1 The Society's on-line presence in 2022/2023 has continued to be an important way for the public to interact with us.

11.2 Our website - city-of-rochester.org.uk - continues to receive good traffic. James O'Donoghue is now helping with website updates.

11.3 Our MailChimp posts continue to be few and far between. This is a result of time pressures.

- 11.4** On Twitter, the Society's account @CORochesterSoc still sits at just over 2,700 followers.
- 11.5** Our Facebook account has grown again to 1,494 followers with 1,285 people liking the page.

Reports of Society representatives on other organisations

12. Civic Voice Rob Flood

- 12.1** The Society remains affiliated to Civic Voice, the umbrella organisation for civic societies, which was founded following the demise of the Civic Trust in 2009. Civic Voice has a significant role in the world of amenity societies and has a voice in Parliament through the All Party Parliamentary Group for Civic Societies.
- 12.2** Civic Voice has continued to offer remote talks in addition to actual meetings now that the pandemic has substantially subsided. I have recently been grateful to receive very useful advice from Ian Harvey (Chief Executive) when deciding whether or not to proceed towards attaining the status of Asset of Community Value for a local property.

13. Medway Tourism Association (MTA) James O'Donoghue

- 13.1** The Medway Tourism Association, incorporates a wide range of organisations engaged in the leisure and tourist industries in the Medway Towns. I assumed responsibility from our President, Alan Moss, as the Society's first face to attend a meeting of the MTA, post Covid-19, which took place on 17 May 2022.
- 13.2** I look forward to continued engagement with the MTA and to receiving minutes shortly together with the date for the next meeting.

14. Rochester City Centre Forum (RCCF) Alan Moss/Rob Flood

- 14.1** The Society continues to be represented at meetings of the RCCF, a non-political coming together of Rochester traders, community groups and residents to discuss the well-being of the city centre. The forum is chaired by Sarah Tranter, and the Society's Chairman is a member of the forum's management committee. If the Chairman has been unable to go along, the Society's President has attended in his stead.
- 14.2** Among the forum's initiatives has been the establishment of the monthly Rochester City Artisan Market, which is going from strength to strength, and the floral displays in the baskets and planters along the High Street.
- 14.3** The forum meetings provide an opportunity for members to hear from, and to question, representatives of bodies involved in, for example, law-enforcement, the care of the homeless and the licenced trade.

15. Dickens Chalet Stakeholder Group

Alan Moss

- 15.1** This group was set up in 2021 following Medway Council's appointment of Rachel Kerr as the project co-ordinator for the repair and restoration of the Dickens Chalet. The group includes representatives of this Society, the Friends of Eastgate House and the Rochester and Chatham Dickens Fellowship.
- 15.2** Council funding for the restoration and long-term preservation of the chalet is being augmented by funds raised by the Dickens Fellowship and the Society. For this purpose, the Society is ring-fencing the income from its Dickens-themed specialised walking tours and from the proceeds of a book *Rochester – A Monument to Dickens?* written by Society member Geoff Ettridge, who is also a member of the Stakeholder Group.

.....
Secretary

.....
Chairman

.....2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

I report to the charity trustees ("the Executive committee") on my examination of the accounts of The City of Rochester Society ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out on the following pages.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Executive committee of the Charity, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). I report in respect of my examination of the Executive committee's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Richard Abel FCA CTA
Aggarwal & Co Ltd, Chartered Accountants
5 London Road
Rainham
Kent
ME8 7RG

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
INCOME			
Income from charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		37,205	26,710
- Subscriptions		2,895	2,860
- Life membership		300	270
- Income from meetings, outings, etc.		454	
- Income from tours		3,566	2,205
- Sale of publications		2,188	1,746
		<u>46,608</u>	<u>33,791</u>
Donations and legacies		380	118
Investment income		115	3
TOTAL INCOME		<u>47,103</u>	<u>33,912</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Expenditure on charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		20,353	15,776
- Costs of meetings and book club		484	26
- Cost of tours		233	-
- Publications		870	787
- Newsletter printing		3,953	2,998
- Grants and sponsorship		2,250	2,049
		<u>28,143</u>	<u>21,636</u>
Other costs			
- Committee and AGM expenses		1,123	993
- Affiliations and subscriptions		554	571
- Insurance		75	285
- Website costs and amortisation		663	144
- Independent examiner's fee		510	450
- Other costs		180	232
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>31,248</u>	<u>24,311</u>
NET INCOME		<u>15,855</u>	<u>9,601</u>
Loss on revaluation of investments (2021 : profit)	6	(2,016)	32,964
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		<u>13,839</u>	<u>42,565</u>
Total funds brought forward		90,970	48,405
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>104,809</u>	<u>90,970</u>

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities and are unrestricted

funds.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2022				
	Notes	2022	2021	
		£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS				
- Intangible fixed assets	7	1,000	1,500	
- Investments	8	40,948	42,964	
		41,948	44,464	
CURRENT ASSETS				
- Stocks		4,824	5,457	
- Debtors and prepayments		305	302	
- Investments - cash equivalents on deposit		9,221	9,213	
- Cash at bank and in hand		51,379	49,135	
		65,729	64,107	
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within 1 year				
- Creditors and accrued expenses		598	428	
- Deferred income		2,270	17,173	
		2,868	17,601	
NET CURRENT ASSETS		62,861	46,506	
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		104,809	90,970	
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY				
Unrestricted funds				
- General funds	9	101,802	89,650	
- Designated funds	9	3,007	1,320	
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS		104,809	90,970	

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Executive Committee on 31st May 2023 and signed on their behalf

Mr R Flood
Chairman

Mrs J Skilling
Treasurer

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

1. STATUTORY INFORMATION

The City of Rochester Society is an unincorporated association registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Charity's registered number and registered office address can be found within the Trustees' Report.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of accounting

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)", Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the inclusion of investments at fair value.

(b) Going Concern

When preparing the financial statements, the Trustees have assessed whether there are significant doubts about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. There are no material uncertainties of which the Trustees are aware in making their assessment.

The Trustees consider that the charity has sufficient cash reserves to enable it to meet its obligations as they fall due for a period of at least 12 months from the date of signing of these financial statements. As such, the Trustees are satisfied that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future and they continue to adopt the going concern basis for preparing these financial statements.

(c) Income and debtors

Voluntary income, which includes donations, gifts and legacies, and fundraising income are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Life subscriptions are taken to income at £10 per member per year, the balance of monies received being carried forward to future years as deferred income.

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis and arises from interest bearing deposit accounts.

Income from charitable activities includes monies for the Society's craft fairs, subscriptions, tours, meetings and sale of the Society's publications. All amounts exclude value added tax.

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

(d) Volunteers and donated services and facilities

No value is incorporated into these financial statements for the services provided by volunteers or where services are provided to the charity as a donation that would normally be purchased from suppliers.

(e) Expenditure and liabilities

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Grant payments are recognised when a liability or constructive obligation arises that results in the payment being unavoidable.

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the Society's craft fairs, tours, meetings and newsletters.

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for good or services it must provide.

(f) Investments

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. The statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluation and disposals throughout the year.

(g) Other financial instruments

The charity enters into basic financial instruments that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other accounts receivable and payable, loans to and from banks, and other third parties. Basic financial instruments are recognised at amortised cost, with changes recognised in the statement of financial activities.

(h) Intangible fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided on all intangible fixed assets at a rate calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life, which is deemed to be three years.

(i) Stocks

Stocks are included at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Stocks consists of publications for resale.

(j) Funds structure

The charity has no restricted funds. Some of the unrestricted income funds have been designated to be for special purposes by the Executive committee.

3. TRUSTEE REMUNERATION

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits for the current or preceding year.

4. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There are no related party transactions in the current year or previous year.

5. TAXATION

The Society is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

6. REVALUATION ADJUSTMENT

In the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 the OEIC fund

investments were carried at cost of £10,000. The accounting policy has been changed for this year to 31 December 2022 to comply with FRS102 to include them at fair value. Accordingly, the statement of financial activities for the year to 31 December 2021 has been restated to include £32,964 as the gain to that date. The current year loss of £2,016 reflects the fall in value of the investment due to stock market conditions.

7. **INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

Website costs	£
Cost - at 1 January and 31 December 2022	<u>1,500</u>
Depreciation	
- at 1 January 2022	-
Charge for year	<u>500</u>
- at 31 December 2022	<u>500</u>
Net book values	
- at 31 December 2022	<u>1,000</u>
- at 31 December 2021	<u>1,500</u>

8. **FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS**

	2022	2021
	£	£
Market value at beginning of the year	42,964	10,000
Net loss on revaluation (2021 : gains)	<u>(2,016)</u>	<u>32,964</u>
Market value at end of year	<u>40,948</u>	<u>42,964</u>

Investment comprises a global growth OEIC fund.

9. **STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY**

	General funds	Designated funds	Total
	£	£	£
Balance at 1 January 2022	89,650	1,320	90,970
Income	45,413	1,690	47,103
Expenditure	(31,245)	(3)	(31,248)
Loss on investments	<u>(2,016)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,016)</u>
Balance at 31 December 2022	<u>101,802</u>	<u>3,007</u>	<u>104,809</u>

The funds held at the year-end date are as follows:

Fixed assets	41,948	-	41,948
Cash	48,372	3,007	51,379
Net other current assets	<u>11,482</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,482</u>
Total funds	<u>101,802</u>	<u>3,007</u>	<u>104,809</u>

The designated funds are held in relation to repairs or conservation work to the Dickens' Swiss Chalet, which is situated currently in the gardens of Eastgate House, Rochester. The Executive committee have decided that sales of a particular publication and special tours should be set aside for such purpose.

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

RULES AND CONSTITUTION

Charity Registration No 252603

June 2017

RULES AND CONSTITUTION OF THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY

- 1. Name.** The name of the Society shall be “The City of Rochester Society”.
- 2. Objectives.** The objectives of the Society shall be to promote:
 - (a) public interest in and care for the beauty, history and character of Rochester and its surroundings;
 - (b) the development of a live, modern community, with the highest standards of architecture and planning;
 - (c) interest in cultural activities;
 - (d) the re-instatement of Rochester’s city status;
 - (e) other features of general amenity, including preservation, conservation and education, for the benefit of both residents and visitors; and to do all such lawful acts and things as are incidental to the attainment of the objectives of the Society. It may, if it deems it fit, do such acts or things in conjunction with any person, body, institution, authority or otherwise.
- 3. Membership.** Membership of the Society shall be open to all who are interested in the aims of the Society and shall be in the following categories: life membership, yearly membership (adult), yearly membership (junior) – for those under 19 years of age), yearly membership (corporate). Membership shall lapse if the full subscription is unpaid by 31st July in the relevant year. The executive committee may also elect honorary members as it deems appropriate. Honorary members shall not be required to pay a subscription.
- 4. Subscription.** The rate of subscription shall be as recommended by the executive committee and approved by a majority of members present at an annual or special general meeting. A new member joining the Society and paying the first subscription between 1st January and 31st March in any year shall not be required to pay a further subscription until 1st April in the following year. Otherwise, all yearly membership subscriptions shall be renewed on 1st April. The Society shall have power to accept donations for any purpose not inconsistent with its aims.
- 5. Meetings.** An annual general meeting shall be held, on a date appointed by the executive committee, between 1st May and 30th June of each year, to receive the executive committee’s report and audited accounts and to elect members of the said committee. The committee shall decide when members meetings of the Society shall be held and shall give at least fourteen days’ notice of such meetings to all members.

Special general meetings of the Society shall be held at the request of ten or more members. Thirty members personally present shall constitute a quorum for a general meeting of the Society. Corporate members shall be entitled to send two delegates, each delegate entitled to one vote, to the annual or special general meeting of the Society.

- 6. Management of the Society.** The management of the Society shall be vested in an executive committee consisting of a chairman, vice-chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary and up to seven other members.

The executive committee may appoint other members of the society to serve on the executive committee, but without voting rights.

The executive committee may also appoint other members of the society as officers, in addition to those defined above, but without voting rights. The executive committee shall decide whether such additional officers shall be required to attend meetings of the executive committee.

Five members of the committee shall constitute a quorum provided that one of that number is an officer of the Society.

The chairman, vice chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary shall constitute the trustees of the society.

- 7. Committee.** The Society shall, at every annual general meeting, elect individually the four officers as defined in rule 6 and up to seven other members to constitute the committee for the ensuing year. The executive committee shall take office at the end of the meeting at which they are elected and shall hold office until the end of the next annual general meeting.

Members of the executive committee may be re-elected for a further term or terms of office, save for the four elected officers, as qualified in rule 8.

The executive committee shall determine the upper spending limit that each of the sub-committees defined in rule 9 may be permitted to spend on their own authority on individual purchases and transactions, though not as a component of a project or item which would in total exceed the permitted upper limit of spending.

- 8. Election of officers.** The chairman, vice chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary shall serve for a period of time not exceeding the following:

Chairman and vice-chairman – three years;
Honorary treasurer – seven years;
Honorary secretary – five years.

If a nomination for any of the above positions is not forthcoming before the date of the annual general meeting, the above periods of office may be extended by a maximum of two years, subject to the approval of the annual general meeting.

Members of the society who have served the permitted continuous period in any of the elected offices and are therefore debarred for re-nomination will qualify for nomination to that office after a period of at least two years.

The chairman, vice chairman, honorary treasurer and honorary secretary shall form the finance and general purposes sub-committee of the executive committee and shall meet as required. It shall have authority to spend society funds when such a decision cannot await the next meeting of the executive committee.

9. Sub-committees. The executive committee shall create the following sub-committees for the efficient running of the society:

- Planning;
- Members meetings/events;
- Tours;
- Publications, Publicity and Promotions;
- Festivals.

The minimum size of respective sub-committees shall be three and each sub-committee may co-opt other members of the society who have special interests or skills which are deemed to be of benefit to the society, subject to the approval of the executive committee.

At its first meeting following the annual general meeting, the executive committee shall appoint an elected member of the executive committee to each sub-committee.

There shall be no limit on the number of sub-committees upon which an elected member of the executive committee or a member of the society may serve.

The chairman of the society shall be an ex-officio member of all sub-committees.

Each sub-committee shall elect its own chairman at its first meeting following the annual general meeting.

An elected member of the executive committee from each sub-committee shall report to the executive committee, usually in writing, on significant issues or when an executive committee decision is required. In the event that an elected member of the executive committee who is a member of the sub-committee is not available, then a substitute may attend and report to the executive committee, but without voting rights.

The executive committee may create working groups as necessary to undertake specific projects.

- 10. Election of President and Vice-Presidents.** A president may be elected at a general meeting of the Society. He or she shall serve in that capacity for a period of one year and shall be eligible for re-election for one or more further terms. One or more vice-presidents may be elected at a general meeting of the Society. Such vice-presidents shall be elected for life. The president and vice-presidents shall not be required to pay a subscription.
- 11. Appeals.** The executive committee shall have the power to make appeals, solicit donations and canvass monies for carrying out the objectives of the Society.
- 12. Expenses and administration.** The executive committee shall, out of monies received by the Society, pay all proper expenses for the management of the Society and shall use the residue of such monies as it thinks fit for or towards the objectives of the Society.
- 13. Investments.** All monies belonging to the Society at any time which are not immediately required for Society purposes shall be invested by the Trustees on behalf of the Society in such investments, securities or property as they consider fit, always complying with the requirements of the Charity Commission.
- 14. Borrowing.** The executive committee may borrow for the objectives of the Society such monies at such rate of interest and in such a manner as it may think fit, provided that the consent of a general meeting of the Society shall first be obtained.
- 15. Amendments.** The constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members present at an annual or special general meeting provided that ten days' notice of the proposed amendment has been sent to all members and provided that nothing therein contained shall authorise any amendment permitting the expenditure of funds of the Society on any object which is not a charitable object at law.
- 16. Winding up.** In the event of the winding up of the Society the available funds of the Society shall be transferred to such one or more charitable bodies, having objectives similar or reasonably similar to those herein before declared as may be chosen by the executive committee and approved by the Charity Commission.

Explanatory note

(This note does not form part of the Rules and Constitution)

The City of Rochester Society was founded in 1967. Its area of interest is that of the City of Rochester as it existed immediately prior to the reorganisation of local government in 1974, which may be described as the urban area of Rochester and Strood.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**

I report to the charity trustees ("the Executive committee") on my examination of the accounts of The City of Rochester Society ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out on the following pages.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Executive committee of the Charity, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Executive committee's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Richard Abel FCA CTA
Aggarwal & Co Ltd
Chartered Accountants

5 London Road
Rainham
Gillingham
Kent, ME8 7RG

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
INCOME			
Income from charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		37,205	26,710
- Subscriptions		2,895	2,860
- Life membership		300	270
- Income from meetings, outings, etc.		454	-
- Income from tours		3,566	2,205
- Sale of publications		2,188	1,746
		<u>46,608</u>	<u>33,791</u>
Donations and legacies		380	118
Investment income		115	3
TOTAL INCOME		<u><u>47,103</u></u>	<u><u>33,912</u></u>
EXPENDITURE			
Expenditure on charitable activities			
- Craft fairs		20,353	15,776
- Costs of meetings and book club		484	26
- Cost of tours		233	-
- Publications		870	787
- Newsletter printing		3,953	2,998
- Grants and sponsorship		2,250	2,049
		<u>28,143</u>	<u>21,636</u>
Other costs			
- Committee and AGM expenses		1,123	993
- Affiliations and subscriptions		554	571
- Insurance		75	285
- Website costs and amortisation		663	144
- Independent examiner's fee		510	450
- Other costs		180	232
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u><u>31,248</u></u>	<u><u>24,311</u></u>
NET INCOME		15,855	9,601
Loss on revaluation of investments (2021 : profit)	6	(2,016)	32,964
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		<u>13,839</u>	<u>42,565</u>
Total funds brought forward		90,970	48,405
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>104,809</u></u>	<u><u>90,970</u></u>

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities and are unrestricted funds.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY
BALANCE SHEET
AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Intangible fixed assets	7		1,000		1,500
Investments	8		40,948		42,964
			<u>41,948</u>		<u>44,464</u>
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stocks		4,824		5,457	
Debtors and prepayments		305		302	
Investments - cash equivalents on deposit		9,221		9,213	
Cash at bank and in hand		51,379		49,135	
		<u>65,729</u>		<u>64,107</u>	
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within					
Creditors and accrued expenses		598		428	
Deferred income		2,270		17,173	
		<u>2,868</u>		<u>17,601</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			62,861		46,506
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			<u>104,809</u>		<u>90,970</u>
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY					
Unrestricted funds					
- General funds	9		101,802		89,650
- Designated funds	9		3,007		1,320
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS			<u>104,809</u>		<u>90,970</u>

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Executive Committee on

2023 and signed on their behalf

Mrs J Skilling

Treasurer

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

1 STATUTORY INFORMATION

The City of Rochester Society is an unincorporated association registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Charity's registered number and registered office address can be found within the Trustees' Report.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).

2 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of accounting

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)", Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the inclusion of investments at fair value.

(b) Going Concern

When preparing the financial statements, the Trustees have assessed whether there are significant doubts about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. There are no material uncertainties of which the Trustees are aware in making their assessment.

The Trustees consider that the charity has sufficient cash reserves to enable it to meet its obligations as they fall due for a period of at least 12 months from the date of signing of these financial statements. As such, the Trustees are satisfied that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future and they continue to adopt the going concern basis for preparing these financial statements.

(c) Income and debtors

Voluntary income, which includes donations, gifts and legacies, and fundraising income are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Life subscriptions are taken to income at £10 per member per year, the balance of monies received being carried forward to future years as deferred income.

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis and arises from interest bearing deposit accounts.

Income from charitable activities includes monies for the Society's craft fairs, subscriptions, tours, meetings and sale of the Society's publications. All amounts exclude value added tax.

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

(d) Volunteers and donated services and facilities

No value is incorporated into these financial statements for the services provided by volunteers or where services are provided to the charity as a donation that would normally be purchased from suppliers.

(e) Expenditure and liabilities

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Grant payments are recognised when a liability or constructive obligation arises that results in the payment being unavoidable.

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the Society's craft fairs, tours, meetings and newsletters.

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for good or services it must provide.

(f) **Investments**

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. The statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluation and disposals throughout the year.

(g) **Other financial instruments**

The charity enters into basic financial instruments that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other accounts receivable and payable, loans to and from banks, and other third parties. Basic financial instruments are recognised at amortised cost, with changes recognised in the statement of financial activities.

(h) **Intangible fixed assets**

Fixed assets are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided on all intangible fixed assets at a rate calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life, which is deemed to be three years.

(i) **Stocks**

Stocks are included at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Stocks consists of publications for resale.

(j) **Funds structure**

The charity has no restricted funds. Some of the unrestricted income funds have been designated to be for special purposes by the Executive committee.

3 TRUSTEE REMUNERATION

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits for the current or preceding year.

4 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There are no related party transactions in the current year or previous year.

5 TAXATION

The Society is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

6 REVALUATION ADJUSTMENT

In the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 the OEIC fund investments were carried at cost of £10,000. The accounting policy has been changed for this year to 31 December 2022 to comply with FRS102 to include them at fair value. Accordingly the statement of financial activities for the year to 31 December 2021 has been restated to include £32,964 as the gain to that date. The current year loss of £2,016 reflects the fall in value of the investment due to stock market conditions.

THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

7 INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Website costs

	£
Cost	
- at 1 January and 31 December 2022	<u>1,500</u>
Depreciation	
- at 1 January 2022	-
- charge for year	<u>500</u>
- at 31 December 2022	<u>500</u>
Net book values	
- at 31 December 2022	<u><u>1,000</u></u>
- at 31 December 2021	<u><u>1,500</u></u>

8 FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	2022 £	2021 £
Market value at beginning of the year	42,964	10,000
Net loss on revaluation (2021 : gains)	<u>(2,016)</u>	<u>32,964</u>
Market value at end of year	<u><u>40,948</u></u>	<u><u>42,964</u></u>

Investment comprise a global growth OEIC fund.

9 STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

	General funds £	Designated funds £	Total £
Balance at 1 January 2022	89,650	1,320	90,970
Income	45,413	1,690	47,103
Expenditure	(31,245)	(3)	(31,248)
Loss on investments	<u>(2,016)</u>	-	<u>(2,016)</u>
Balance at 31 December 2022	<u><u>101,802</u></u>	<u><u>3,007</u></u>	<u><u>104,809</u></u>

The funds held at the year-end date are as follows:

- Fixed assets	41,948	-	41,948
- Cash	48,372	3,007	51,379
- Net other current assets	<u>11,482</u>	-	<u>11,482</u>
- Total funds	<u><u>101,802</u></u>	<u><u>3,007</u></u>	<u><u>104,809</u></u>

The designated funds are held in relation to repairs or conservation work to the Dickens' Swiss Chalet, which is situated currently in the gardens of Eastgate House, Rochester. The Executive committee have decided that sales of a particular publication and special tours should be set aside for such purpose.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE CITY OF ROCHESTER SOCIETY**

I report to the charity trustees ("the Executive committee") on my examination of the accounts of The City of Rochester Society ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out on the following pages.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Executive committee of the Charity, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Executive committee's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commissioner under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Richard Abel FCA CTA
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Chartered Accountants

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